

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAJ-01 EB-11 TRSE-00 FRB-02 OMB-01 STR-08

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R 261200Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6370

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO

US MISSION EC BRUSSELS

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SUBJECT: GOF PARLIAMENTARY VICTORY IN VOTE ON ECONOMIC MEASURES

POUCHED TO AMCONGEN'S BORDEAUX, LYON, MARSEILLES, MARTINIQUE
NICE AND STRASBOURG

BEGIN SUMMARY. IN VOTING JANUARY 25 AT CONCLUSION OF SPECIAL
PARLIMENTARY SESSION CALLED TO DISCUSS GOF DECISIONS TO FLOAT
THE FRANC AND ASSOCIATED MEASURES, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY REAFFIRMED
ITS CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT. OPPOSITION MOTION CENSURING GOF
RECEIVED 208 VOTES (246 NECESSARY FOR ASSEMBLY TO CENSURE GOVT.)
THERE WAS NEVER ANY QUESTION OF GOF LOSING. MAJOR INTEREST IN
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THE RESULT COMES FROM THE FACT THAT 28 OF 34 DEPUTIES IN THE

CENTER OPPOSITION GROUP, SUPPORTERS OF JEAN LECANUET AND JEAN-JACQUES SERVAN-SCHREIBER, VOTED WITH THE LEFT OPPOSITION. END SUMMARY.

1. UNDER FIFTH REPUBLIC CONSTITUTION, GOF NOT OBLIGED TO SUBMIT THESE ECONOMIC POLICY DECISIONS TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. WE UNDERSTAND FROM AN ELYSEE SOURCE THAT THE DECISION TO DO SO WAS TAKEN PERSONALLY BY PRESIDENT POMPIDOU. ACCORDING TO THIS SOURCE, POMPIDOU GENUINELY WISHED TO PLAY THE DEMOCRATIC GAME AND SUBMIT THIS MAJOR MATTER TO PARLIAMENTARY DISCUSSION. HE ALSO WISHED TO DEMONSTRATE SOLIDARITY BETWEEN THE EXECUTIVE AND THE LEGISLATIVE MAJORITY, GIVING THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY PARTIES A CHANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN DISCUSSING THE ISSUES. MOREOVER, ACCORDING TO THE SOURCE, CONVOKING THE SESSION CUTS SOME OF THE GROUND OUT FROM UNDER THE OPPOSITION WHICH HAD IN FACT CALLED FOR PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON THE GOF DECISION.

THE SESSION ALSO SERVES AS A LIGHTNING ROD, DEFLECTING SOME OF THE CRITICISM OF GOF POLICIES. ANOTHER REASON FOR CALLING THIS FIRST EXTRAORDINARY SESSION SINCE SEPTEMBER 1969 STEMMED FROM AN APPARENT GOVERNMENT WISH TO USE THE FACT OF PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE TO UNDERLINE THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE FINANCIAL SITUATION AND THE

EFFECTS WHICH THE GOF HOPES THAT ITS DECISION TO FLOAT THE FRANC WILL HAVE IN IMPROVING IT.

2. GOF DID NOT ASK FOR VOTE OF CONFIDENCE FOR ITS MEASURES. ACCORDING TO CONSTITUTION, GOVERNMENT CAN ASK FOR ASSEMBLY CONFIDENCE ON MATTERS OF "GENERAL POLICY." BUT NOT ON SPECIFIC MATTERS. GOVERNMENT POSITION WAS THAT FRANC FLOAT WAS A SPECIFIC DECISION, THUS ONE ON WHICH IT COULD NOT SEEK VOTE. FINAL VOTE WAS ON CENSURE MOTION TABLED BY SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNISTS AND HAD THEY NOT DONE, SO SESSION WOULD HAVE ENDED WITHOUT ANY VOTING. IT IS NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR WHETHER THE GOF DECISION IS ONE OF "GENERAL POLICY" OR NOT. GOVERNMENT PROBABLY HOPED TO AVOID A VOTE, NOT BECAUSE OF CONCERN AT A DEFEAT, WHICH WAS NEVER IN THE CARDS, BUT BECAUSE IT HOPED NOT TO PUT THE CENTER OPPOSITION DEPUTIES IN A POSITION IN

WHICH THEY WOULD VOTE AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT. THE CENSURE MOTION, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CAREFULLY WORDED MERELY TO CRITICIZE GOVERNMENT POLICIES, DID NOT SUGGEST ANY ALTERNATIVES, SUCH AS THOSE CONTAINED IN THE JOINT SOCIALIST

COMMUNIST POLITICAL PROGRAM. THIS MADE IT EASIER FOR CENTER OPPOSITION TO VOTE FOR THE RESOLUTION. THE RESOLUTION RECEIVED 208 VOTES, THOSE OF ALL THE SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNIST DEPUTIES AND OF 28 OF 34

CENTER OPPOSITION DEPUTIES. CENTRIAST DECISIONS TO VOTE AGAINST THE
GOVERNMENT WAS MADE EASIER BY
FACT THAT MAJORITY PARTIES HAVE MORE THAN 20 VOTE MAJORITY EVEN IF
ALL CENTRISTS VOTED FOR CENSURE RESOLUTION. SINCE DEFECTIONS FROM THE
MAJORITY PARTIES ON THIS ISSUE WERE UNTHINKABLE, THE OUTCOME WAS NEVER

IN DOUBT.
STONE

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